

# Spectator Etiquette

Cross Country is not the typical spectator sport because you cannot see the entire race from one location. In an effort to ensure that every runner is given an equal opportunity to complete cross country courses safely while giving parents and spectators ample opportunity to view the participants, please pass along these simple guidelines for parents and spectators to follow during meets.

**COURSE:** Spectators are welcome to view runners on the course; however, please keep in mind that the course is set up for the runners. Be aware of caution tape, flagging, traffic cones and painted lines. These are used to outline the course boundaries.

- During races, spectators should stay outside of the course boundaries and never cross over the course while a race is in progress. Crossing in front of runners no matter what place they are in is both

hazardous and disrespectful. Wait until the ENTIRE FIELD has passed before you cross over a course boundary.

- Once your runner's race is over, please do not use the course to exit the competition area until the race is completely finished.

- Use caution when walking around course boundary markers so as not to alter their placement or direction. This could affect the direction a runner takes on the course.

- Remember the course is our "Field of Play". Think twice about placing yourself in it. You would not randomly cross a football field in the middle of a game or walk across the free throw line to get to the other side of the court while a game is in progress – the same applies to a course in cross country

**ASSISTANCE:** Pacing or running alongside of an athlete during a race is not allowed. *NFHS rules forbid running alongside a competitor during competition - even to encourage.* This will result in the disqualification of the athlete. This applies to parents, spectators, teammates and COACHES. *Additionally, do not hand any runner any food or water during the race (as you would see during marathons).* Again, this will result in

the disqualification of the athlete. If an athlete needs special assistance due to a disability, please make sure race officials are made aware of this by the coach prior to the start of the meet.

**STARTING LINE:** In order to ensure a safe and equitable start for participants, parents and spectators should not gather in front of the starting line or in the starting box area for any reason. Meet officials have duties that must be completed and instructions to communicate prior to the meet and need a clear area to do so.

**FINISH LINE:** At the finish of a race, the runners will file through a chute or corral area. Please wait until the runners have exited the finish area before greeting them. Do not enter the finish area or remove athletes from the chute/corral area. Your runner may need to provide information to finish personnel so individual and team scores can be tabulated.

Please help us provide a safe environment for all the competitors!

